



# FEMA

## NEWS RELEASE STATE/FEDERAL DISASTER FIELD OFFICE JOINT INFORMATION CENTER



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### One Week Remains to Apply for Disaster Assistance

EVERETT, WA -- Residents and business owners in the 15 disaster declared counties who sustained damage from the severe storms and flooding of October 15 - 23 have one week remaining to apply for disaster assistance. **January 6, 2004 is the last day applications will be accepted.** That is also the deadline for submitting loan applications to the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) for disaster-related losses to real and personal property.

"We want people to understand that this is merely a registration deadline," said Anthony Russell, federal coordinating officer for the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). "For individuals who have already applied, their cases will continue to be processed; however, we will not be accepting new registrations."

Federal and state disaster recovery officials urge those who have not done so to apply as soon as possible by calling the toll-free registration line at **1-800-621-FEMA (3362)**. Hearing or speech-impaired individuals may call the TTY registration number at 1-800-462-7585. Registration phone lines are open Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. until further notice.

"Applicants may qualify for assistance under several federal and state programs," said Diane Offord, state coordinating officer for the disaster. "Among these are temporary housing assistance, grants to meet disaster-related needs and SBA loans for homeowners, renters and businesses of all sizes."

To date, 1,269 individuals have applied for disaster assistance in the state. A total of over \$4.1 million dollars has been approved for individuals and businesses impacted by the disaster. This includes over \$2.2 million from FEMA and State programs and over \$1.9 million in disaster loans from the SBA.

The 15 counties that received the presidential disaster declaration are Chelan, Clallam, Grays Harbor, Island, Jefferson, King, Kitsap, Mason, Okanogan, Pierce, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, Thurston and Whatcom.

The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) is the federal government's primary source of money for the long term rebuilding of disaster damaged private property. SBA helps homeowners, renters, businesses of all sizes and private, nonprofit organizations fund repairs or rebuilding efforts, and cover the cost of replacing lost or disaster damaged personal property.

**Note to Editors:** Disaster information is available on FEMA's World Wide Web at <http://www.fema.gov> or the Washington Emergency Management Division at <http://emd.wa.gov>

These disaster loans cover uninsured or uncompensated losses and do not duplicate benefits of other agencies or organizations.

On March 1, 2003, FEMA became part of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security. FEMA's continuing mission within the new department is to lead the effort to prepare the nation for all hazards and effectively manage federal response and recovery efforts following any national incident. FEMA also initiates proactive mitigation activities, trains first responders, and manages the National Flood Insurance Program and the U.S. Fire Administration.

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